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# **Circular Letter**

Special:

TO: **ALL PEHMCAL HEALTH BENEFITS OFFICERS AND ASSISTANT  
HEALTH BENEFITS OFFICERS**

SUBJECT: **CALPERS 2011 OPEN ENROLLMENT HEALTH FAIRS –  
WEB-BASED ALTERNATIVE**

## **2011 Open Enrollment Health Fairs Web-Based Alternative**

This year, CalPERS is pleased to introduce a Web-based “virtual health fair” as an alternative to hosting an onsite health fair during Open Enrollment Period.

Over the past three years, attendance at onsite Open Enrollment Health Fairs has declined by well over 60 percent. Attendance appears to have been negatively impacted by multiple factors such as: budgetary constraints, scheduling conflicts, limited travel budgets, facility availability, employee work schedules, and work priorities. Employers and employees alike have been requesting an option to provide more convenient access to compare health plan information.

In light of the economic challenges we are all facing, technology offers a cost-effective, convenient solution to onsite health fairs. The *2012 Webinar on Health Plan Design, Rate, and Benefit Changes* is the alternative that will provide employees, retirees, and their dependents the opportunity to receive information from expert representatives of each of the CalPERS health plans. The webinar offers on-demand video and downloadable materials regarding the 2012 health plans, providing participants with convenient 24/7 access from home or office.

## **Why Offer a Web-Based Alternative**

The *2012 Webinar on Health Plan Design, Rate, and Benefit Changes* Web-based alternative to onsite health fairs gives every participant the opportunity to learn about the various health plan benefits and provides convenience without compromising quality.

Advantages of a Web-based health fair include:

- 24/7 access to health plan information and choices available
- Consistent information to all members
- Access to information regardless of employee work schedules
- Expanded access to family members involved in choosing the family's health plan

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**Why Offer a Web-Based Alternative (contd.)**

- Opportunity for agencies who have limited space or resources to host onsite fairs
- Compliance to those state agencies subject to the Governor's Executive Order B-06-11 prohibiting discretionary travel
- Convenient links to related health plan websites such as *Find A Provider* tools for in-network physicians and hospitals, *Find A Pharmacy* tool for in-network pharmacies, and pharmaceutical formulary databases.

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**Do I Need An Onsite Health Fair?**

CalPERS Health Plan Partners will participate in a limited number of onsite Open Enrollment Health Fairs this year. Considerations to determine whether an onsite health fair is vital for your agency are:

1. If your agency hosted an onsite health fair last year, how well attended was the fair?
2. What methods could you use to increase attendance at your health fair?
3. If mandatory attendance by employees at your health fair is not required by your agency, what percentage of your employees would be able to attend a two-hour health fair on a specified day?
4. Do your employees have access to computers and internet in order to get information about health benefits?
5. How does the Open Enrollment period of October 10 – November 4, 2011, impact your resources such as facility space, budget, or staffing?
6. Does your agency have staff resources available to coordinate and promote an onsite health fair?

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**Onsite Health Fair Scheduling Application**

Notwithstanding the advantages of the web-based health fair, if your agency wants to request an onsite health fair, follow these instructions:

- a. Using the email addresses below, request the *Onsite Health Fair Scheduling Request Application*.

Health Plan	Email
Anthem Blue Cross	<a href="mailto:angelica.rolan@wellpoint.com">angelica.rolan@wellpoint.com</a>
Blue Shield of California	<a href="mailto:CalPERSAccountMgr@blueshieldca.com">CalPERSAccountMgr@blueshieldca.com</a>
Kaiser Permanente	<a href="mailto:calpers@kp.org">calpers@kp.org</a>

- b. Fill out the application form sent to you by the health plan partner.
- c. Submit the completed form to the health plan partner(s) as instructed on the application.

If your request for an onsite health fair is approved, the health plan partners will coordinate directly with your agency contact regarding scheduling and logistics.

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**No Gifts Policy**

In order to comply with CalPERS' guidelines, no gifts (such as pens, cups, clothing, food, etc.), prizes for raffles or drawings, game prizes, or giveaways under any guise are to be distributed at health fairs or similar Open Enrollment functions. Handouts are provided to educate the members and are limited to information about the health plans.

This policy applies to any agency holding health fairs from June 16, 2011, through November 15, 2011. The policy applies at all times to any agency holding a health fair for the sole purpose of initial enrollment. This policy does not apply to other health fairs and other health-related activities conducted during other times of the year.

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**Important Dates**

Posting of Web-based health fair <i>2012 Webinar on Health Plan Design, Rate, and Benefit Changes</i>	September 1, 2011
Submission of applications to health plan partner(s) to request onsite health fairs	Today through September 2, 2011
Onsite health fair calendar	October 3 – November 4, 2011
2011 Open Enrollment Period	October 10 – November 4, 2011

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**Easy Access To The Web-Based Health Fair**

With internet access, you will be able to access the Web-based health fair by simply logging on to the CalPERS website. After September 1, 2011, members can go to the Video Center and click on the link for the *2012 Webinar on Health Plan Design, Rate, and Benefit Changes*.

We are excited about providing the webinar as a health fair alternative, and we hope that agencies will fully utilize this option. This will be a convenient method for all members – active or retired, in urban or rural areas, from home or office – to learn about the unique features of each health plan.

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**Questions**

If you have any questions about this Circular Letter, please contact CalPERS at **888 CalPERS** (or **888-225-7377**).

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Sincerely,

DARRYL WATSON, CHIEF  
Customer Account Services Division